



## CIRCUMCISION

At birth, most boys have a sleeve of skin and tissue (foreskin) that completely covers, or almost completely covers, the end of the penis. Circumcision is the surgical removal of some of this foreskin so that the tip of the penis and the opening to the urethra, through which the baby urinates are exposed to air. Routine circumcisions are normally performed in the hospital within a few days of birth. this procedure takes on a few minutes and is rarely complicated. Many circumcisions are done without medications. An oral sugar solution may be given to raise the level of endorphins therefore decreasing the sensation of pain.

Circumcision is not essential to a child's health therefore parents should choose what is best for their son by looking at the benefits and risks. Scientific studies show some medical benefits of circumcision, however these benefits are not sufficient enough for the American Academy of Pediatrics to recommend that all infant boys be circumcised. Parents are encouraged to consult with their obstetrician and pediatrician, and read as much as possible about this procedure. Factors affecting the decision include medical conditions, aesthetics, religion, cultural attitudes, social pressures, and tradition. Many patents choose to have their sons circumcised because "they don't want their sons to feel different: or because "all other men in the family were circumcised."

At present there is controversy over whether or not circumcision is advisable from a medical standpoint. Recent studies have concluded that uncircumcised males may be more likely to develop urinary tract infections than those who have been circumcised. This my be because a circumcised penis is cleaner or easier to clean than an uncircumcised penis. Studies also have shown that there is a slightly lower risk of getting sexually transmitted diseases.

Circumcision does, however, pose certain risks such as infection and bleeding. This procedure is done only on stable, healthy infants. If an infant is premature or has an illness, circumcision can be done at a later time. This may require a pediatric urologist to perform the procedure.

TO OUR PATIENTS THAT WILL BE DELIVERING BABY BOYS OR IF THE SEX OF THE BABY IS UNKNOWN AND YOU DESIRE TO HAVE A CIRCUMCISION DONE ON YOUR BABY, PLEASE BRING THE COPY OF THE CIRCUMCISION CONSENT WITH YOU TO THE HOSPITAL. THIS MUST BE ON THE CHART PRIOR TO THE TIME YOUR PHYSICIAN PERFORMS THIS PROCEDURE. IF THIS IS NOT ON THE CHART, YOUR PHYSICIAN WILL RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE TO DO THE CIRCUMCISION. THE BEST PLACE TO KEEP THE CONSENT IS IN YOUR BAG.